

**LANTERN  
THEATER  
COMPANY**

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**High-res production photos available now at:**

[www.canarypromo.com/lantern](http://www.canarypromo.com/lantern)

**View the release online:** <http://bit.ly/JH8jvo>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 30, 2012**

**Lantern Theater Company Presents a Limited Return  
Engagement of David Ives' *New Jerusalem, The Interrogation  
of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation:  
Amsterdam, July 27, 1656*, Directed by Charles McMahon,  
September 4 – 23, 2012**

**Special events will accompany *New Jerusalem*, including *SpinozaFest:  
Echoes of a Greater Thinker in the Modern World*, September 7 – 9, 2012**

PHILADELPHIA – [Lantern Theater Company](http://www.lanterntheater.org) will open its 2012/13 season with a pair of plays by **David Ives**: *The Liar*, an adaptation of the French comedy classic by **Pierre Corneille**, and a limited return engagement of *New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656*, which last fall played to sold out houses and was extended twice to meet demand, quickly becoming the best-selling production in the Lantern's history. Heralded as "an absorbing debate over big ideas" by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, "a lively and inspiring debate" by *Philadelphia City Paper*, "an engaging courtroom drama full of complex philosophical ideas" by *Philadelphia Jewish Voice*, and "a first-rate production of a literate and often eloquent play" by *Broad Street Review*, *New Jerusalem* will run from **September 4 – 23, 2012 (press opening Wednesday, September 5, 7 p.m.)**. [A full performance schedule follows in the fact sheet below.]

As the Inquisition bears down on them, a small Jewish community flees Portugal to find a tenuous peace in seemingly liberal Amsterdam. But Spinoza, a favorite son of the community and the rabbi's heir apparent, is a revolutionary thinker. When the boldness of his ideas strains the bounds of Amsterdam's professed tolerance, it leads to a dangerous confrontation between powerful political forces and his own beloved community. Based on true events in the life of one of the greatest philosophers in history, David Ives' engaging drama challenges traditional political and religious thinking with conviction, passion, and wit.

This limited return engagement of *New Jerusalem* features the same cast as the original production: **Sam Henderson** as Baruch de Spinoza, **David Bardeen** as Rabbi Mortera, and

**Seth Reichgott** as Abraham van Valkenburgh, with **David Blatt**, **Jake Blouch**, **Kittson O'Neill**, and **Mary Tuomanen**. Also returning are **Nick Embree** (scenic design), **Maggie Baker** (costume design), **Shon Causer** (lighting design), and **Nick Rye** (sound design), and Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon** will again direct.

Tickets for *New Jerusalem* are \$20 – \$38 and are available online at [lanterntheater.org](http://lanterntheater.org) or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only. Additional discounts are available for seniors and groups of 10 or more. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Streets in Center City Philadelphia.

On September 7-9, the Lantern will present *SpinozaFest: Echoes of a Greater Thinker in the Modern World*. “The Lantern's mission is to put great work on stage that brings people together, starts meaningful and enjoyable dialogue, and brings big ideas into perspective and shows how they connect with our lives,” says Lantern Artistic Director Charles McMahon. “When we have a show like *New Jerusalem* that so many people are keen to see and discuss, and we run out of time to continue showing the play, we *have* to bring it back. And with *SpinozaFest*, this year we have a whole program of additional events intended to put Spinoza's ideas in greater context for audiences.”

## About the Playwright

In an interview with Lantern Associate Artistic Director **Kathryn MacMillan**, playwright **David Ives** explained, “On the one hand, yes, I am surprised by *New Jerusalem's* reach and success because it's a play about a 17th century philosopher and no doubt looks forbidding at first glance. Yet when I set myself to work on the play I knew that this was a story with extraordinary dramatic and theatrical and human possibilities. Even more importantly, I knew that the issues raised by Spinoza's excommunication and banishment, and by his philosophy, are questions that resonate today as much as in 1656 – and indeed will always resonate as long as nations/societies/communities are troubled by heterodox thinkers, and for as long as people wonder about the nature of reality and the existence of God. That is to say, forever.”

“David Ives' reputation in academic and professional theater circles is as a master craftsman – a comedic writer and a script doctor,” notes McMahon of the *New Jerusalem* playwright. “Ives' career has really blossomed into this incredible creative outpouring in addition to his technical prowess, and that's why you will see his work on several Philadelphia stages this season – including his sophisticated, playful, and fiendishly clever adaptation of Pierre Corneille's classic French comedy, *The Liar*, which the Lantern will present **November 1 – 25, 2012**.”

Ives is well known for his evenings of one-act comedies *Time Flies* and *All In The Timing*, which won the Outer Critics Circle Playwriting Award and during the 1995/96 season was the most performed non-Shakespeare play in the country. His full-length plays include *Venus in Fur*, which recently closed after an award-winning Broadway run at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre; *New Jerusalem*, which won the prestigious Hull-Warriner Award; *Is He Dead?* (adapted from Mark Twain); *Irving Berlin's White Christmas*; *Polish Joke*; and *Ancient History*.

## ***SpinozaFest: Echoes of a Great Thinker in the Modern World***

**September 7 – 9, 2012**

This special weekend of performances, discussions, food, drink, and fun celebrates great thinker Baruch de Spinoza. A *SpinozaFest* Pass is available for \$85 (\$70 for seniors, students, and groups of 10+), which grants access to all *SpinozaFest* events, plus one ticket to any performance of *New Jerusalem* excluding opening night.

### **Friday, September 7**

**6:30 p.m.**

#### **Lecture and Q&A: Directors: In Conversation – *Echoes of Spinoza in the Modern World***

Description: Director **Charles McMahon** will highlight Spinoza's huge impact on modern philosophy and politics, as well as how those big ideas shaped the Lantern's production of *New Jerusalem*.

Location: Lantern Lab; approx. 60 minutes

Cost: FREE

**8:00 p.m.**

#### **Performance: *New Jerusalem* by David Ives**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 2 hours 15 minutes

Cost: \$35 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**10:30 p.m.**

#### **Post-Show Discussion: Artists: In Conversation with the *New Jerusalem* cast**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 30 minutes

Cost: FREE

### **Saturday, September 8**

**11:30 a.m.**

#### **Lecture and Lunch: *The Sephardic Community in Amsterdam***

Description: Following a social lunch, **Anne Oravetz Albert**, a specialist in Early Modern Jewish history from the University of Pennsylvania, will explore the history of the Sephardic Jewish community in Amsterdam, revealing how their culture was shaped by persistence in the face of obstacles and a history of domination by others.

Location: MilkBoy Philly, 1100 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia; approx. 90 minutes

Cost: \$35 (includes lunch and a beverage, excludes alcohol; discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**2:00 p.m.**

#### **Performance: *New Jerusalem* by David Ives**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 2 hours 15 minutes

Cost: \$35 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**4:30 p.m.**

#### **Post-Show Discussion: Artists: In Conversation with the *New Jerusalem* cast**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 30 minutes

Cost: FREE

**7:00 p.m.**

#### **Curtain Raiser: *Spinoza's Thinking***

Description: Created and performed by *New Jerusalem* assistant director and Lantern teaching artist **M. Craig Getting**, this entertaining and anecdotal lecture will introduce audiences to Spinoza's work, his life as a young man in Amsterdam, and his relationship to his Sephardic Jewish community.

Location: Lantern Lab; approx. 25 minutes

Cost: FREE

**8:00 p.m.**

#### **Performance: *New Jerusalem* by David Ives**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 2 hours 15 minutes

Cost: \$38 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**10:30 p.m.**

**Post-Show Discussion: Artists: In Conversation with the *New Jerusalem* cast**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 30 minutes

Cost: FREE

**Sunday, September 9**

**11:00 a.m.**

**Staged Reading and Discussion: *The Art of Ex-Communication***

Description: Director **Joshua Browns** and a company of local actors will perform selections from **Karl Gutzkow's** seminal and rarely-performed German play, *Uriel Acosta*, about the ex-communication of troubled Jewish thinker Uriel da Costa – a significant figure in the events of *New Jerusalem*. This staged reading will feature an English version by 20<sup>th</sup> century scholar **Henry Spicer**, but *Uriel Acosta* was the first classic play to be translated into Yiddish and is subsequently an important play in the canon of Yiddish theater as well. The performance and post-show audience discussion will focus on da Costa and Spinoza to shed light on the practice of ex-communication in the Sephardic Jewish community.

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 90 minutes

Cost: \$15 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**1:00 p.m.**

**Curtain Raiser: *Spinoza's Thinking***

Description: See Saturday 7 p.m.

Location: Lantern Lab; approx. 25 minutes

Cost: FREE

**2:00 p.m.**

**Performance: *New Jerusalem* by David Ives**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 2 hours 15 minutes

Cost: \$38 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**4:30 p.m.**

**Post-Show Discussion: Artists: In Conversation with the *New Jerusalem* cast**

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 30 minutes

Cost: FREE

**7:00 p.m.**

**Highlight Event: *Spinoza's Beit Din***

Description: *The Beit Din*, or Jewish rabbinical court, re-opens the case against Spinoza in our own time. At the end of *New Jerusalem*, within the setting of 17th century Amsterdam, Spinoza faces a verdict that may ex-communicate him from his beloved Sephardic Jewish community. At *The Beit Din*, attorneys from both sides argue the case anew, citing Spinoza's powerful legacy to entreat our own audience to overturn or uphold the verdict against Spinoza. This fun, theatrical event explores the justice and consequences of Spinoza's fate, in his time and ours, and features the artists behind *New Jerusalem* and attorneys **Nathan and Alyza Lewin** from the Washington DC law firm of Lewin & Lewin, LLP.

Location: Lantern Mainstage; approx. 90 minutes

Cost: \$15 (discounts for seniors, students, and groups of 10+)

**2012/13 Season**

Lantern Theater Company will continue its 2012/13 season with the Philadelphia premiere of the brilliantly funny *The Liar* by David Ives, adapted from the comedy by Pierre Corneille, directed by Kathryn MacMillan (November 1 – 25, 2012); *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, by Martin McDonagh, directed by Kathryn MacMillan (January 10 – February 3, 2013); William Shakespeare's *Henry V*, directed by Charles McMahan (March 14 – April 14, 2013); and closing with the Philadelphia premiere of *Heroes* by Tom Stoppard, adapted from the comedy by Gérald Sibleyras, directed by M. Craig Getting (May 16 – June 9, 2013).

**New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at  
Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656  
FACTS**

<p><b>Performances:</b></p> <p>Tue, 9/4 7:00 p.m.  <b>Wed, 9/5 * 7:00 p.m.</b>  Thu, 9/6 7:00 p.m.  Fri, 9/7 DIC / SF / AIC 8:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/8 SF / AIC 2:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/8 SF / ST / AIC 8:00 p.m.  Sun, 9/9 SF / ST / AIC 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wed, 9/12 ST 2:00 p.m.  Wed, 9/12 7:00 p.m.  Thu, 9/13 7:00 p.m.  Fri, 9/14 ADIC 8:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/15 ST 2:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/15 ST 8:00 p.m.  Sun, 9/16 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wed, 9/19 ST 2:00 p.m.  Wed, 9/19 ST 7:00 p.m.  Thu, 9/20 7:00 p.m.  Fri, 9/21 OC 8:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/22 OC 2:00 p.m.  Sat, 9/22 8:00 p.m.  Sun, 9/23 2:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>*Opening Night</b></p> <p>SF: <i>SpinozaFest</i>, various times</p> <p>ST: <i>Spinoza's Thinking</i>, various times</p> <p>DIC: Directors: In Conversation, 7 p.m.</p> <p>AIC: Artists: In Conversation, post-show</p> <p>ADIC: Artistic Directors: In Conversation, 7 p.m.</p> <p>OC: Open Captioned Performance</p>	<p><b>Dates:</b> <i>New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656</i>  September 4 – 23, 2012  Preview Performance on September 4 at 7:00 p.m.  <b>Opening night is Wednesday, September 5, 7:00 p.m.</b></p> <p><b>Theater:</b> Lantern Theater Company  At St. Stephen's Theater  10th &amp; Ludlow Streets  Philadelphia, PA 19107</p> <p><b>Prices:</b> Adults: \$20-\$38  Seniors: \$20-\$33  Students: \$10-\$28  \$10 student rush tickets available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only</p> <p>Special discounts are available for seniors and groups of 10 or more.</p> <p><b>Tickets: Phone:</b> (215) 829-0395  <b>Online:</b> <a href="http://www.lanterntheater.org">www.lanterntheater.org</a></p> <hr/> <p><b>New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656</b>  By <b>David Ives</b>  Directed by <b>Charles McMahon</b></p> <p><u>Cast (in alphabetical order)</u>  <b>David Bardeen</b> as Rabbi Saul Levi Mortera  <b>David Blatt</b> as Gaspar Rodrigues Ben Israel  <b>Jake Blouch</b> as Simon de Vries  <b>Sam Henderson</b> as Baruch de Spinoza  <b>Kittson O'Neill</b> as Rebekah de Spinoza  <b>Seth Reichgott</b> as Abraham van Valkenburgh  <b>Mary Tuomanen</b> as Clara van den Eenden</p> <p><u>Production Team</u>  <b>Meghan Jones</b> Production Manager  <b>Nick Embree</b> Scenic Designer  <b>Maggie Baker</b> Costume Designer  <b>Shon Causer</b> Lighting Designer  <b>Nick Rye</b> Sound Designer  <b>Rebecca Smith</b> Stage Manager  <b>M. Craig Getting</b> Assistant Director</p>
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